

## **Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass**

### **CHAPTER ONE**

1. Why is Frederick not sure when he was born?
2. What is Frederick's last name at birth?
3. Why would slaveholders want to keep a slave ignorant of such a simple thing as the date of his birth?
4. Who were Frederick's mother and father?
5. Why does Frederick make the point that a slaveholder who has fathered a child is likely to be tougher on the child?
6. Why does Frederick only rarely see his Mother?
7. Is Frederick's relationship with his mother typical of other slave children?
8. What is the role of the overseer on the plantation?
9. What is the relationship of the slaveholder to the overseer to the slave on the plantation?
10. What do we learn about Plummer, the overseer?
11. Who is Frederick's first master?
12. Why does Frederick tell the story of Llyod Ned?

### **CHAPTER TWO**

1. Who were the family members of Frederick's master Colonel Edward Lloyd?
2. What was the relationship of Colonel Lloyd to Frederick's master?
3. Was there a pecking order among slaves? Explain.
4. Why would a slave whose life on a plantation was very bad fear being sold to a slavetrader?
5. Why was Severe an appropriate name for the overseer?
6. Why is it difficult to find copies of slave songs?
7. Why does Frederick suggest that slaves sing out of sorrow rather than out of joy?

### **Chapter Three**

1. How did Colonel Lloyd keep the slave boys from taking his fruit?
2. Why was it particularly difficult to be the slaves in charge of Colonel Lloyd's horses?
3. What is ironic about Colonel Lloyd's treatment of his horses compared to the treatment of his slaves?

### Chapter Three continued - Page Two

4. What happened to the slave who told Colonel Lloyd the truth about his master?

### Chapter Four

1. Why is Mr. Austin Gore a "first-rate overseer"? What is ironic about his name?
2. What reason does Mr. Gore give for killing Demby the slave?
3. What other examples does Frederick give of his statement "that killing a slave, or any colored person... is not treated as a crime, either by the courts or the community"?

### Chapter Five

1. What was life like for Frederick on the plantation?
2. Why was Frederick so happy to be leaving the plantation?
3. Why did he particularly want to go to Baltimore?
4. What relationship did his new master have to his old master?
5. Why did Frederick, who was seven or eight, not know the month or year of his sailing?
6. What were Frederick's initial impressions of his new mistress, Mrs. Sophia Auld?

### Chapter Six

1. To what does Frederick attribute the kindness of Mrs. Auld?
2. What, according to Frederick, changes her?
3. Why is Mr. Auld angry when he finds that Mrs. Auld is teaching Frederick his letters?
4. Why does Frederick call Mr. Auld's forbidding his learning how to read "invaluable instruction"?
5. Why does inability to read keep men enslaved according to Frederick and Mr. Auld?
6. What does Frederick hope to gain by learning to read?
7. Who teaches Frederick why black men are not taught to read?
8. Why is this lesson so important to him?
9. Why is the life of a city slave so much better than the life of a plantation slave?

## Page Three

10. Why does Frederick relate the story of the slaves Henrietta and Mary?

## Chapter Seven

1. How did Mrs. Auld change and why did she change?
2. What plan did Frederick adopt to learn how to read now that Mrs. Auld was no longer teaching him?
3. What did Frederick learn from the book "The Columbian Orator"?
4. How does Master Auld's prediction about Frederick and learning come true?
5. How does Frederick learn the meanings of the words abolition and abolitionist?
6. What do the two Irishmen encourage him to do? Why does he not trust them?
7. How does Frederick learn to write?
8. How does he trick the white boys into teaching him new letters?

## Chapter Eight

1. Why was Frederick forced to return to the plantation after the death of his master?
2. How was the value of the master's property determined? How were the slaves valued?
3. Why was the division of property between Mistress Lucretia and Master Andrew so horrifying to the slaves?
4. What happened to Frederick's grandmother after the deaths of Lucretia and Andrew?
5. How does this anecdote help explain the value of slaves?
6. How were slaves valued compared to livestock?
7. Who owns Frederick by the end of chapter eight?

## Chapter Nine

1. Why does Frederick now know the date?
2. Who was Frederick's new master?
3. What rule of slaveholding does Master Thomas Auld violate?
4. How did the slaves get food?
5. Why does Frederick say that "adopted slaveholders are the worst"?
6. What, according to Frederick, happens to Master Thomas Auld after his conversion to Christianity? Why?
7. Why does Frederick let Master Thomas's horse run away?

8. How does Master Thomas propose to "break" Frederick?
9. Why was Mr. Covey's reputation for breaking slaves of great value to him?

## Chapter Ten

1. Why does Mr. Covey whip Frederick?
2. Why are the slaves so fearful of Mr. Covey? Why does their work go on in his absence?
3. What does Frederick mean by "Mr. Covey's forte consisted in his power to deceive"?
4. Why does Mr. Covey buy a slave to use as a breeder?
5. Why does he hire Mr. Samuel Harrison, a married man? What irony does Frederick find in this?
6. How does Mr. Covey succeed in breaking Frederick?
7. How does Frederick succeed in again becoming a man?
8. Why does Frederick go to Master Thomas Auld?
9. Why does he return to Covey? Who convinces him to do so? What does Sandy Jenkins suggest Frederick do?
10. How does Frederick win the fight with Mr. Covey?
11. Why does Frederick contend that Mr. Covey does not turn him in?
12. Why was Frederick's battle with Mr. Covey "the turning point in my career as a slave"?
13. How are the holidays used to "disgust the slave with freedom"?
14. Where does Frederick go after leaving Mr. Covey's?
15. Who is his new master and how does he treat him?
16. Why and where does Frederick begin a Sabbath school? Why is it essential the slaves tell no one about it?
17. What do the slaveholders like the slaves to do on the Sabbath?
18. Why does Frederick decide to include the slaves in his Sabbath school in his plans for escape?
19. How do the slaves plan to run away?
20. What is the purpose of the "protections" written by Frederick and how do they nearly cause the death of the slaves?
21. What happens to each of the slaves who attempted to run away?
22. When Frederick returns to Baltimore what does he do?
23. Frederick again decides to fight when he is attacked. What happens to him? What does Master Hugh attempt to do for Frederick?

24. What must Frederick do with the wages he earns each week as a caulker? Why?

## Chapter Eleven

1. For what two reasons does Frederick tell us that he cannot relate the means of his escape?
2. Why does he not approve of the underground railroad?
3. What does Master Hugh do to attempt to encourage Frederick to continue to earn money?
4. What effect does his encouragement have?
5. What does Frederick ask Master Thomas? What is he told?
6. What arrangement does Frederick eventually make with Master Hugh? Why is this arrangement to Master Hugh's advantage and why does Frederick agree to it?
7. What does Master Hugh do when he discovers that Frederick has left town to find work?
8. When and to where does Frederick run away?
9. Why does he feel so lonely?
10. Who helps Frederick in New York? How?
11. How is it possible for Frederick and Anna to marry? Why is their marriage such an important event?
12. Why does Mr. Ruggles suggest Frederick leave New York for New Bedford?
13. Who helps Frederick and Anna in New Bedford? How does he help them?
14. Why did Frederick change his name so many times? How chooses Douglass?
15. What does Frederick believe about life in the North? Was he correct?
16. How were the wharves of New Bedford different from those of Baltimore?
17. What conditions did he find for "colored people"?
18. How does Douglass make a living when he can't find work as a caulker?
19. How does Frederick become known to the "anti-slavery world"?
20. Why is Douglass at first reluctant to speak out against slavery?

